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MERCER  
ISLAND

# LIVING

A Social Publication for the Residents of Mercer Island



*meet the*  
**CONCANNONS!**

photo by Jacquelyn Paneque

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# Mercer Island COMMUNITY FUND

## Grants Support Mercer Island Community Events and Programs

by Erin Krawiec

As a Mercer Island resident, you've likely attended the Summer Celebration, the Mercer Island Farmers' Market, or the Leap for Green Fair. Or perhaps you've taken in a performance of either Shakespeare or Mostly Music in the park or Youth Theater Northwest. What do all these popular events have in common? The Mercer Island Community Fund ("MICF") grants crucial funding annually to each, using donation money received from Mercer Island community members.

The Mercer Island Community Fund was established in 1985. It was the city's 25th anniversary and the community celebrated with a party called "Mercerversary." At that time, Lola Deane, who was a longtime community volunteer, wanted to make sure that there was sustainable funding for programs and projects that benefited the MI community. Given the economic base and demographics, it had proven difficult for community organizations to qualify for government and foundation grants. So, she proposed a community foundation be established that would be eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions to fund worthwhile programs and projects. As



MICF makes annual grants to support MIYSF's Summer Day Camp.

part of "Mercerversary," the proceeds from an auction were set up to provide the seed money for MICF.

MICF is now a 501(c)3 organization and since its founding, MICF has granted money to countless programs, events, and organizations that benefit everyone from children to the elderly in the areas of the arts, environment, community development, recreation, social services, education and health. Historically, MICF's grants have ranged from annual sponsorship of Island events to providing

Island-based public charities with funds to launch new programs or to continue well-established programs. By awarding these grants MICF strives to respond to the changing needs of the Mercer Island community.

Depending on the scope of the project, awards typically range from \$500-\$5,000. However, MICF will provide special grants to fund larger projects, such as the Island Crest Park Renovation Project in 2017 (MICF contributed \$12,000 toward new lights and artificial turf), \$10,000 for a new rain shelter for

the Girls and Boys Soccer Clubs and \$4,310 for equipment for the Friendship Circle of Washington, a volunteer-driven recreational program for children with special needs.

"We've awarded almost \$80,000 in grants in the past two years. However, many Islanders still haven't heard of MICF, so we're on a mission to educate the community about who we are, what we do, and how Mercer Islanders can help," noted Foundation President Erin Krawiec.

If you want to your charitable donations to stay home on Mercer Island, the Community Fund offers a simple option to achieve your goal. "This is a way that you can make one donation and we do the rest for you," Krawiec said. "We are stewards of your donation. We do our due diligence and make sure the money goes to well-run nonprofit organizations in our community." Grant applicants are vetted every year by MICF's board to ensure they and their projects meet the objectives of the Community Fund, and stringent follow-up ensures the money was spent appropriately. MICF's pool of donations is managed and invested throughout the year through the Seattle Foundation.

If you're a Mercer Island senior looking to create a future endowment for a community group, the Community Fund can help facilitate your wishes.

Donations to MICF are tax-deductible and can be made online at [www.micommunityfund.org/donate](http://www.micommunityfund.org/donate).

Any non-profit that benefits the Mercer Island community can apply for grant funding. 2019 grant applications are due by Feb. 15.



In 2017, MICF granted money to purchase sideline shelters for the Girls and Boys Soccer Boosters.



MICF annually grants money to support the Mercer Island Summer Celebration.



MICF grants money to support the Mostly Music in the Park Concert Series every year.